

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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TAGS: EAGR, EPAP, UR, US

SUBJECT: OUTLOOK FOR UKRAINIAN CROPS

1. UKRAINIAN FIRST DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE
ALEKSANDR IVANOVICH TOVSTANOVSKIY TOLD THE CHIEF OF THE
ADVANCE PARTY OF CONGEN KIEV JUNE 27 THAT THE UKRAINIAN
GRAIN CROP WOULD BE AS GOOD AS LAST YEAR'S (48.6 MILLION
TONS) IF THE PREDICTED ADEQUATE WARM WEATHER SHOULD COME
TO PASS.

2. TOVSTANOVSKIY ADMITTED THAT UKRAINIAN GRAINS ARE ABOUT
TWO WEEKS BEHIND AVERAGE MATURITY. HE SAID UKRAINIAN
CORN PARTICULARLY HAD BEEN HURT BY THE COOL WEATHER.
AIDES LATER DISCOUNTED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CORN CROP
WHICH WAS SAID TO BE 5 MILLION TONS. TOVSTANOVSKIY SAID
THE GRAIN CROP AREA WAS SLIGHTLY LARGER THAN LAST YEAR, O
ABOUT 17.8 MILLION HECTARES.

3. THE SUGAR BEET CROP WAS ALSO BEHIND IN MATURITY AND
"NOT IN AS GOOD CONDITION AS IT OUGHT TO BE." GIVEN GOOD
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TEMPERATURES IT SHOULD BE A GOOD CROP, ABOUT 50 MILLION
TONS. SIMILIARLY SUNFLOWERS ARE NOT IN BAD SHAPE, BUT
HOT WEATHER WOULD ASSURE A GOOD CROP. FOUR MILLION
HECTARES HAVE BEEN PLANTED IN USSR. THE MINISTER ADMITTE
THAT APPLES AND PEARS HAD BEEN HARD HIT BY A LATE FROST
AND A POOR CROP IS EXPECTED.

4. TOVSTANOVSKIY REFERRED TO OTHER AGRICULTURAL PROBLEMS. HE MENTIONED PROBLEMS WITH NEW BEET HARVESTERS IN WET SOIL, POOR PERFORMANCE OF EXPERIMENTAL POTATO HARVESTERS IN HEAVY SOIL, ADMITTED TO A SHORTAGE OF AGRICULTURAL LABOR- NOTABLY IN THE CENTRAL UKRAIN FOR THE SUGAR BEET HARVEST AND FOR THE VEGETABLE HARVEST, AND THE NEED FOR BETTER ORGANIZATION OF HARVEST MACHINERY. AS AN EXAMPLE OF THE PLANNING UNDERWAY FOR MACHINERY USE, HE NOTED THAT 30 GRAIN COMBINES FROM THE ZAKARPATSKAYA OBLAST HAD BEEN DESIGNATED TO BE MOVED TO OTHER AREAS AS THE HARVEST ADVANCED.

5. RESPONDING TO QUESTIONS ON FARM SPECIALIZATION, THE MINISTER EMPHASIZED THAT UKRAINIAN COMMITMENT TO SPECIALIZATION BEGAN IN EARNEST AFTER THE MARCH 1976 UKRAINIAN PARTY PLENUM. KILKHOZES HAD BEEN REDUCED FROM 30,000 TO 7,000 BY CONSOLIDATION AND SOVKHOZES NOW NUMBERED 2000. OF 6000 AGRICULTURAL COMBINES, 2000 WERE DEVOTED TO CATTLE RAISING. TYPICAL SIZE WAS 20,000 HEAD. THERE WERE EXPERIMENTS WITH LARGER UNITS BUT SOME OF THEIR PROBLEMS HAD NOT BEEN SOLVED YET, NOTABLY THE DISPOSAL AND PROCESSING OF MANURE. TOVSTANOVSKIY SAID THAT THE UPCOMING JULY SESSION OF THE UKRAINIAN SUPREME SOVIET WOULD DEAL WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ISSUE, INCLUDING THE USE OF FERTILIZER. MATLOCK

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